

MEANS WAR

Japan and Russia Drop
Diplomacy to Fight

ENVOYS RECALLED.

No Declaration; Clash
Looked for Soon.

19 TO 14 ON JAPAN AT SEA.

Experts Make Her Favorite in a
Naval Engagement.

Russia Puts All Blame for the Break on Japan—Notice of Withdrawal of Her Minister Sent Before Russian Reply Was Received—Japan Had Unofficial Knowledge of the Terms and Suspected Russia's Motives in Delaying the Note—Her "Irreducible Minimum" Not a Bluff—Fleet Reported Taken Off Patrol to Move into Position for Fight—Troops Moving to the Coast for Embarkation to Korea—President Will Announce Neutrality.

ST. PETERSBURG, Feb. 7.—The Official Messenger to-day announces that the Japanese Minister has presented a note announcing Japan's decision to break off further negotiations and the recall of himself and the whole staff of the legation.

In consequence of this the Czar has ordered the Russian Minister at Tokio and his whole staff to leave Japan without delay.

The Messenger declares that the attitude of Japan, which has not awaited Russia's answer, throws the whole responsibility for the rupture on Japan.

The *Norve Vremya*, in an article justifying Russia's diplomacy, says: "As it turns out, the whole exchange of notes was a farce. Japan only awaited the moment when the cruisers she bought in Italy should have reached Chinese waters. They arrived at Singapore and the Japanese threw off the mask without even waiting for the Russian reply."

"The Asiatics have shown themselves Asiatics. They are unable to observe even the slightest decency. History does not know of a case of similar behavior. We are convinced that public opinion in Russia will give the Japanese a proper reply."

The *Norve Vremya* points out that the rupture does not necessarily mean war, but it dismisses all other methods of settlement as improbable. It contends that it is certain that, after Japan's recalling her Minister, no honorable foreigner can possibly accuse Russia of maintaining an aggressive attitude.

CZAR TO PRAY FOR VICTORY.
The Czar will go to Moscow soon. Rumor variously attributes his object as being either solemnly to declare war or pray for victory.

Until the appearance of the official notice of the withdrawal of the Japanese Minister everything had gone on here as usual. The Czar and Zarina witnessed a French drama at the theatre on Saturday evening. The Czar appeared to be remarkably composed and cheerful. The officials did not betray the slightest anxiety, all acting as if the Russian reply would certainly satisfy Japan.

There was, therefore, general astonishment to-day when it was learned what had happened, but there is nothing in the aspect of the city to show that a momentous event has occurred, and scarcely a single individual displays excitement. It was not until late to-day, indeed, that the news became at all generally known. No prayers for peace or other reference to the situation were made in the churches.

"What's going to happen next?" is the unperturbed comment frequently heard. Even now there is a strong feeling in some quarters that Japan's decision was prompted by the delay in delivering the Russian note and that it may be reconsidered when the conciliatory character of the note itself is realized.

JAPANESE LEGATION'S DEPARTURE.
The Japanese staff is expected to leave here on Tuesday or Wednesday. The British Embassy will take charge of Japanese interests.

MAY DECLARE WAR TO-DAY.

Japanese Expect It—National Enthusiasm Centinues.

TOKIO, Feb. 7.—It is expected that a declaration of war will be issued to-morrow. There is no popular excitement yet, although the national enthusiasm continues.

Russian interests have been entrusted by the retiring Minister to the Austrian Minister, the Italian Minister having declined to accept the duty.

DEFENCE OF JAPANESE ACTION.

The leading newspapers declare that Japan is most reluctant to draw the sword, but she has no other choice. They republish

the Russian note of 1895 declaring that the retention of the Liaotung Peninsula by any foreign Power would endanger the imperial Chinese capital, render the independence of Korea illusory and jeopardize the peace of the East. They invite a repetition of Trafalgar and Waterloo, since Japan fights as England fought to crush a military despotism and to secure equal rights for all nations.

Baron de Rosen, the Russian Minister, had an interview yesterday with Foreign Minister Komura at the latter's request. Baron Komura declared that inasmuch as further negotiations would be plainly futile, Japan henceforth would be compelled to take such independent action as her interests dictated.

The Mikado will give an audience to Baron de Rosen on Feb. 11, and the Russian representative will leave Tokio the next day. Much sympathy for him is expressed here. He has been a true friend to Japan, and an advocate of peace.

The Japanese Consul at Newchwang has been withdrawn.

SKOUL, Feb. 7.—Japanese vessels have ceased playing between Chemulpho and Fusan, expecting hostilities between the Japanese and Russian fleets.

TROOPS TO KOREA.

PORT ARTHUR, Feb. 7.—It is reported that a Japanese force which has been concentrated on Susima Island has been or immediately will be transported to Korea.

WAR WAS INEVITABLE.

Japan's "Irreducible Minimum" Was Not a Bluff—The Negotiations.

LONDON, Feb. 7.—Japan ordered her Minister to withdraw from St. Petersburg before receiving Russia's official reply, which she had been awaiting three weeks. Russia thereupon recalled her Minister from Tokio. It is not clear at the present writing whether Baron de Rosen, the Russian Minister to Japan, had in the meantime actually delivered the reply to the Japanese authorities.

Russia, in announcing the rupture to the Powers, attempts to throw the whole responsibility for the consequences upon Japan.

HOW THE BREAK CAME.
The whole diplomatic correspondence will be issued within a few hours. Meanwhile it is possible to make a clear statement of the unofficial diplomatic history of the past fortnight, which will serve to throw important light on the situation.

Russia's reply to the Japanese proposals was formulated and communicated unofficially to Japan through the medium of the French Foreign Office as long ago as Jan. 27. In effect this intimation, as described in some of its details in these despatches three days later, conveyed Russia's willingness to accede to Japan's principal demands regarding Korea, but in Manchuria Russia reserved certain interests, expressed and implied, which virtually amounted to a denial of the Japanese contentions.

The Tokio authorities, after careful consideration, decided that they could not accept the proposed reply. They, however, earnestly pressed Russia to communicate her reply officially in order that they might take formal action on it.

RUSSIAN MOTIVES SUSPECTED.
When day after day passed without its delivery Japan became convinced that Russia's reasons for withholding a decision, which she had fully formulated and communicated to more than one outside Power, were not of a diplomatic nature, and were not in harmony with international courtesy. Japan considered that it was therefore entirely competent for her to take such action yesterday as would be taken in any event as soon as the reply was placed in her hands.

Japan was unable, owing to the unofficial character of the communications, to bring forward the foregoing facts in answer to the Russian intimation that she acted highhandedly in breaking off the negotiations before the reply was received, but they constitute a complete refutation of the implied accusation.

FRENCH EFFORTS TO PREVENT WAR.
The Tokio authorities have the most grateful feelings toward M. Delcasse, the French Foreign Minister, for his skillful and earnest, though futile, efforts to bring the crisis to a peaceful solution.

It is reported from Paris that the Foreign Office still has some faint hope of averting war. It is pointed out that many times diplomatic relations have been ruptured without war.

Moreover, Russia must now be disillusioned of her professed belief that Japan has been, to a considerable extent, bluffing. It was hoped that the Czar would make great sacrifices for the sake of peace, and that when at last he became convinced of the absolute good faith of all Japan's protestations, would finally compromise. This hope of escape at the twelfth hour is not shared by any of the Japanese representatives in Europe.

QUICK CLASH LOOKED FOR.
War has not yet technically begun, according to the information at hand at the moment of writing, but hostilities, it is believed, are a question of hours only.

Baron Hayashi, the Japanese Minister, to-night even admitted that the present situation is equivalent to war. It is hardly expected that a formal declaration will follow, but Japan will probably notify the Powers that a state of war exists, as in the case of the United States and Spain.

It is not expected that either side will attempt serious military operations until spring is well advanced. Japan's naval campaign will probably be of a very active description.

19 TO 14 ON JAPAN AT SEA.

Several prominent English naval authorities during the past week made careful

calculations regarding the efficiency and equipment of the two Powers and reached the conclusion that the chances were 19 to 14 in Japan's favor.

Japan's decision, on the whole, comes as a surprise to most European diplomats.

RUSSIA'S OFFER.
M. Delcasse exaggerated yesterday when he said that Russia had conceded 75 per cent. of the Japanese demands. Forty per cent. would have been nearer the fact, but nobody took Japan quite literally when she announced at the outset that she was not trying to bargain, but was setting down the irreducible minimum of her interests. Now that it is known that she meant just what she said it is clear that war has been practically inevitable from the first.

DANGER TO OTHER POWERS.
The danger of the complications involving other Powers is not immediate. It is a grave peril, nevertheless, and one that probably will be increased a few weeks hence by hostilities in the Near East. The most hopeful element is the Anglo-French cordiality. Both countries are depended upon to do their best to localize the war and every probable contingency has been considered.

A careful reading of the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance shows that the present situation is precisely what it was designed to cover. It does not matter whether Japan acts as the aggressor or on the defensive so long as she is seeking to "maintain the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea." England's duty is now to maintain neutrality, and to use her efforts to prevent other Powers from joining in hostilities against Japan, and, in case they do so, to conduct the war in common with Japan and make peace in mutual agreement with her ally.

Regarding the financial and commercial effects of war, they will be greater on the Continent, especially in France, than in England. The situation has been pretty well discounted in the London markets, while France has been optimistic up to within a few days.

BRITISH CABINET WAR SESSION.

Meeting To-day—Japan Reported Moving Troops to the Coast.

LONDON, Feb. 7.—When Baron Hayashi, the Japanese Minister here, saw the St. Petersburg despatch announcing the withdrawal of the Russian Legation from Tokio and the Japanese Legation from St. Petersburg he said he had received no official advice on the subject.

He was asked if the withdrawal of the legations was not tantamount to the existence of a state of war, and he bowed his assent. The Minister made no attempt to conceal his grief.

The British Cabinet will meet at the Foreign Office to-morrow. The Marquis of Lansdowne, the Foreign Minister, will preside, Prime Minister Balfour being still confined to his bed.

JAPAN MOVING TROOPS.

LONDON, Feb. 8.—Japan has not withdrawn her censorship of news despatches, and information from Tokio is meagre and unimportant. It is stated that the newspaper correspondents will be allowed to join the army shortly. All reports concur in declaring that the populace of Japan is not excited, and is only demonstrative to the extent of becoming enthusiastic over the troops as they pass through the streets.

The Standard's Tokio correspondent states that the railways are rapidly conveying troops to the ports designated for their embarkation, but there is no report of their going aboard the transports. Naval movements are not even hinted at in the despatches.

A St. Petersburg despatch says that the rupture was a pleasant surprise to the Foreign Office officials. Everybody was tired of the continuous exchange of notes. Now that the strain is over much champagne is being drunk in toasts to the army.

A Shanghai despatch says it is reported that a British detachment will be sent from there to Chingwangtao, presumably to guard the Tientsin-Newchwang Railway.

TO COMBAT RUSSIAN FLEET.
A St. Petersburg correspondent telegraphs that Admiral Skrydloff, commander of the Black Sea fleet, will command the fleet in the Far East in the event of war. He is a born fighter of indomitable courage and indefatigable will. His appointment will delight the navy.

A despatch to the Times from Tokio says that the Russian gunboat Mandurine is in dock at Nagasaki, and that probably she will be unable to leave before hostilities break out.

OUR NEUTRALITY PROMISED.

President Will Announce It as Soon as War is Declared.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7.—The United States, through Acting Secretary of State Loomis, to-day gave assurances of strict neutrality on its part in the trouble between Japan and Russia. The news of the severing of relations by Japan with Russia was received here to-day from many sources. The Japanese Minister received the news yesterday and told it to Mr. Loomis. The latter conveyed the news to President Roosevelt.

Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador, also received the news. He at once called upon Mr. Loomis and sought to learn what the attitude of this country would be. Mr. Loomis replied that the United States would observe a strict neutrality.

The Japanese Minister said in an interview to-day: "Japan's last representation to Russia was sent on Jan. 13. The Russian Government was asked to answer the note as soon as possible. It was represented to Russia that Japan had already waited for some

definite settlement of the questions at issue for several months and it was difficult under the circumstances to endure any further delay after the Japanese Government had in good faith and earnestly for so long a time used every effort to arrive at an understanding.

"No reply having been received, the Japanese Minister at St. Petersburg was on several occasions directed to inquire and did inquire as to when the answer would probably be sent.

"He was told by Count Lamsdorff that it was impossible to give any definite answer on that point, as the matter rested exclusively with his Majesty the Emperor.

"Meanwhile, while the Russian answer was thus delayed, there was a great and unusual display of Russian military and naval activity in the Far East, and the Russian Governor at Vladivostok gave notice to all Japanese residents there that they must make preparations to be ready to leave at a moment's notice. All of these actions on the part of Russia could not be reconciled with her declaration of a sincere desire to preserve peace, and they seem to show that if Japan waited until Russia favored her with a reply she would inevitably be placed in a disadvantageous and dangerous position. Therefore the Japanese Government, probably having exhausted all means to secure a reply to the early despatch, and knowing no reasonable cause for delay, felt that the easiest way to put an end to a situation which had become unbearable was to terminate negotiations which had proved entirely futile."

The Minister said that this statement was made of his own volition as an explanation of Japan's reasons for notifying the Japanese Minister at St. Petersburg to ask for his passports, but he had no doubt that the Japanese Government would issue a formal statement on the subject.

Secretary Hay returned to Washington from Thomsville, Ga., to-day. To-night he had an interview with President Roosevelt and they discussed the Japanese-Russian situation. As soon as war is declared the President will issue a proclamation of neutrality.

HORSES FOR RUSSIANS.

Offer Purchases Them in Massachusetts—\$50,000 Pairs of Shoes Ordered.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Feb. 7.—Purchases of saddle horses have been made in Springfield within a few days for shipment to Russia, according to local horsemen. The animals were not of the common stock and were evidently designed for the use of officers.

A well groomed Russian, who admitted being in the employ of the Russian Embassy, left Springfield for Washington yesterday. To the need of a Springfield concern he said that he had lately closed a contract with a shoe factory in the eastern part of the State for 50,000 pairs of shoes for immediate shipment to Russia. He regarded war with Japan as inevitable and expressed unlimited confidence in the ability of Russia to gobble up Japan in a single swoop if so disposed and not interfered with by other nations.

SENATOR HANNA DOING WELL.

His Physician Says His Heart Action is Good and There Are no Complications.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7.—Senator Hanna's condition remained practically unchanged to-day. His physicians issued two bulletins, the first of which said that there was no material change, that the Senator's temperature was 101.6 and his pulse 90.

Dr. Osler of Johns Hopkins University and Dr. Brewer of New York City were present at a consultation of the doctors this afternoon. It was announced that Dr. Edward P. Parker of Cleveland, the Senator's private physician, had been summoned to Washington.

The afternoon bulletin, which was signed by Drs. Osler and Rice, reads: "P. M.—Senator Hanna is doing well. His temperature this morning was a little higher, but his heart action was good and there are no complications.

Senator Hanna's brother, H. M. Hanna, came up from his winter home in Georgia this evening.

E. R. THOMAS RETURNS.

Nothing to Say of Contradicted Story That His Auto Ran Down an Italian Woman.

The French liner La Lorraine, in yesterday from Havre, was tempest tossed almost from port to port. She shipped many seas and for two days was ice-sheathed from stem to stern and from water line to truck. Crews that roared over her weather, bow reached the pier, and the ship, at times, bending and twisting rails and stanchions.

Among the ship's passengers were Edward R. Thomas, owner of the racehorse Hermis, and Mrs. Thomas. They were on the passenger list as Mr. and Mrs. Edouard.

While Mr. Thomas was away it was reported that while automobiling in Italy he had run down a peasant woman near Naples. He denied the story, and an investigation of the woman's death by the Neapolitan authorities did not connect him with the accident. Mrs. Thomas said at the Lorraine's pier that he had nothing to say just now for publication.

Mrs. Thomas was ill when she boarded the Lorraine at Havre and was accompanied by a physician, who assisted her off the ship.

DOWIE'S ORDERS RESCINDED.

Residents of Zion City Allowed for the First Time to Seek Work Elsewhere.

CHICAGO, Feb. 7.—By a proclamation issued yesterday by Governor Speicher, residents of Zion City for the first time are allowed to seek work elsewhere because of lack of employment in their town. The permission is accompanied by an injunction not to forget Zion, but to spend only the money necessary and to bring the rest to the Zion City Bank.

Dowie has refused to allow his people to keep cows or chickens in the city, but Speicher rescinded this order. It is rumored in Zion City that Dr. Dowie will be recalled from his tour of the world to secure funds by a municipal bond issue.

Barnett's Extract of Vanilla is the best, perfectly pure, highly concentrated. —Ad.

CITY ABLAZE

Baltimore's Business
District Burned.

LOSS \$70,000,000.

Dynamite Used to Check
the Flames.

SQUARE MILE OR MORE GONE

Ten Engines Go From Here
—Many From Other Towns.

Eight Firemen Killed and Hundreds of Buildings Destroyed—Soldiers Called Out to Keep Order—The Fire Began in the Dry Goods House of J. E. Hurst & Co.—A Series of Explosions Came and the Fire Spread East, North and South—High Wind Sprung the Flames—Explosions of Drugs Helped Their Progress—Dynamite Used on Some of the Main Buildings of the City—Telephone and Telegraph Wires Went Down Early, Almost Completely Cutting Off Communication With the Place.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 8, 2 A. M.—A great fire, probably the greatest since the Chicago fire in 1871, has been raging in this city since 11 o'clock Sunday morning, and at this hour is still unchecked.

An area equal to a square mile or more has been burned. Fully 600 buildings have been destroyed. The loss is estimated at \$70,000,000.

Shortly before midnight Baltimore telephoned to Director of Public Safety Smith of Philadelphia to telephone to New York and ask the authorities there to rush engines to them. The fire was spreading rapidly. The fresh water supply was exhausted, and the engines were, pumping salt water. The Philadelphia engines could not use this, as it ruins them.

The fire at 2 A. M. extends from Howard street to Jones's Falls, from Baltimore street to the river front. If the New York engines come quickly the flames can be coped with, but the fire as it stands is beyond control. [Ten engines are on the way from New York.]

The entire business district is destroyed. Some of the finest buildings in Baltimore have been burned. Several were dynamited. Scores of persons were injured and are in the hospitals. So far as known eight firemen were killed.

The fire was jumping at midnight at the rate of a square every thirty minutes to Broadway, in the very heart of the residential district. The Continental Trust Building, the finest in the city, is in flames. Roughly the main area burned now extends from Liberty street to Jones Falls. (The correspondent telegraphed here: "Too hot. I must get out.") The office from which this despatch was sent is eight blocks away from the fire.)

There were more than a hundred injured in the hospitals, and among them is Baltimore's Fire Chief, George W. Horton, who was the victim of a live wire.

The flames have jumped past the Equitable Building and are now lapping the post office and court house. The flames are raging squares beyond the Equitable Building, along Gay street from Baltimore to Fayette. Gay street is the second most important thoroughfare in the city.

The city is without electric lights. The streets are filled with a terror-stricken army, moving anywhere and everywhere. Overhead for miles is a canopy of sparks, many of them blazing chunks as big as a man's hand. They twist and turn in the whistling winds. Everywhere they are spreading terror. As they fall, sometimes a mile away from where the fire is raging, they spread fresh terror. There is no one to fight new fires.

WHERE THE FIRE STARTED.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 7.—The fire started shortly before 11 o'clock this morning in the large store of John E. Hurst & Co., at the southwest corner of Hopkins place and Gorman street, and spread with terrible rapidity by a series of explosions or crashes south, east and north.

At 11 o'clock to-night the fire had reached Baltimore and Calvert streets. It travelled with lightning rapidity and raged so fiercely that it swept all buildings before it.

At 11:55 o'clock the Custom House had taken fire and the flames were threatening the last stand of the telegraph operators.

The entire force of the Baltimore Sun hastily evacuated the paper's building and went on a special train to Washington for the purpose of using the plant of the

Evening Star and getting out a morning edition of the paper. No papers will be printed here to-morrow morning.

At midnight the burned and burning section is comprised in the squares bounded by Charles, Lexington, Lombard, Light, St. Paul and Howard streets.

The Western Union office in the Equitable building has been closed, the fire having eaten to its very doors. It is marked for a dynamite charge, and all the occupants have been ordered out.

This is only one of the great Baltimore buildings to go. The Court House, at Calvert and Fayette streets, costing \$3,000,000; the Calvert building, Fayette and St. Paul streets, costing \$1,250,000; the Equitable Building, Calvert and Fayette, value \$1,135,000; the Continental Trust Building at Baltimore and Calvert streets, value \$1,125,000; the general offices of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Calvert and Baltimore streets, value \$1,250,000; the City Hall and post office and the monument which gives Baltimore its sobriquet are in this territory.

At 11 o'clock to-night the fire was still at its height. The area burned was fully a square mile, and it was estimated that 600 buildings had been destroyed. The Continental Trust Building, a sixteen story structure, caught soon after 10 o'clock. The Baltimore Herald building seems doomed and may be dynamited at any time. The Baltimore Record building is a wreck and the building of the Baltimore American is also on fire. The new Court House is threatened, as is the Custom House which is now in course of erection.

REGULARS AND MILITIA OUT.

Finding the entire police force inadequate to cope with the crowd the Fourth and Fifth regiments were called out, together with 200 Regulars from Fort McHenry under Col. Ennis. The city is now practically under martial law. The winds are high and the entire city is filled with flying sparks and burning embers. So far it is learned that eight firemen have been killed by falling walls and the loss will reach \$70,000,000.

The entire force of the Western Union Telegraph Company was ordered out of their quarters in the Equitable Building. The fire is still at its height, spreading rapidly and beyond control of the firemen.

TELEGRAPH OFFICES SHUT DOWN.

At about 9:15 o'clock the firemen decided to blow up a building next to the Western Union building at Calvert and Fayette streets. Everybody was ordered out of the Western Union.

The operators saved their instruments, typewriters, stationery and unseal messages. They worked at their keys up to the last possible minute.

The Postal Telegraph building, at Baltimore and Calvert streets, became unsafe at 9:45 o'clock and the operating force had to flee.

The fire was then close at hand and the expectation was that the building would be dynamited to check the course of the flames.

The telegraph companies started in to establish temporary offices in parts of the city that were not burning. Messages were sent by train to Washington to be filed on the wires there.

Later the Washington wires failed, and then all news had to be sent through Philadelphia.

At 9 o'clock the fire, going north, had crossed Baltimore street at the northeast corner of Charles. It was then being held well in check at Charles street, south of Baltimore street.

At 8:30 o'clock the fire area extended from Lombard street on the south to Lexington street on the north and from Liberty street on the west to Light street on the east. The building of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had been vacated.

"It is a great calamity," said Mayor McLean. "I know that the men are doing everything in their power."

Meanwhile the wind had shifted and blew wildly from the southwest. Up Liberty street sheets of flame were licking up C. Y. Davidson's, Nolan's saloon and the handsome building of the Stief piano concern.

Dynamite was used to help check the spread of the flames. It was used first on buildings in McClellan alley, which at that time were a mass of flames. In half an hour after the fire started there were a dozen big warehouses in the wholesale dry goods and notions district burning fiercely. The entire city fire department was called out, but was utterly powerless to check the flames, which were spread by high southerly winds, and by noon there were savage fires in at least thirty big warehouses, and the fire was steadily eating its way into successive blocks.

The city was first notified of the fire by the explosion at Hurst's store. A sharp hissing roar went up. This was followed by a peculiar whistling noise like that made by a shrill wind. In a moment streets and pavements all over the city were crowded with people, who gazed overhead as if expecting to see some phenomena of nature. As they looked another deafening crash occurred and a dense column of cinders and smoke shot up over the central part of the city and in a huge brown column moved rapidly toward the northeast. Borne on the strong wind the column—smoke, blazing cinders and even pieces of tin roofing—spread over the centre of the city as far north as Calvert and Biddle streets, where a rain of cinders fell, compelling the pedestrians to dodge red hot pieces of wood.

Two more explosions followed and by this time the word was passed that the cause of the detonations and shocks was an immense fire in Hopkins place. Thousands of persons boarded the cars running to that section. Other thousands hurried on foot.

Of all the spectators, comparatively

few saw the fire itself, they could not get within half a block of it. Even the policemen guarding the approaches to the fire had repeatedly to shift their positions and dodge falling cinders.

Pieces ten, six and eight feet long were lifted into the air by the terrific heat, sailing upward like paper kites, and, when they reached a point beyond the zone of the most intense heat, fell clattering to the streets. The firemen and police who were obliged to stick to their dangerous posts dodged into doorways for shelter from the rain of hot missiles.

Crash after crash could be heard within the burning district, but even the firemen could not tell from which building they came. In the seething furnace of flame all sense of the direction of sounds was lost. Walls and flooring fell in thunderous rolls that echoed for blocks away, but the identity of the buildings that were being burned up and crumbled into ashes could not be established.

Building after building fell a prey to the flames and apparently there was no check to the onward sweep of destruction. On Baltimore street the block between Liberty and Sharp was soon ablaze. Then came the next block east to Hanover and several buildings in the next block beyond. Meanwhile stores north of Baltimore street were being similarly consumed. Mullins's Hotel caught, and other buildings near it, west of Liberty street, on the south side of Baltimore. The block then seemed doomed. Down in Hopkins place, where the fire started, the Hurst Building and the other wholesale houses on both sides of the street crumbled and fell. The big houses of Daniel Miller & Sons and R. M. Sutton & Co. soon caught, and the fire seemed destined to spread south to Lombard street in this wholesale district.

Along Gorman, east and west from the Hurst Building, there were a dozen buildings burning, and scores more were threatened.

The spectacle of ruin and destruction from any point in these doomed blocks dismayed even the firemen. At 2 o'clock, with the wind from the south-southwest, the flames were spreading up Liberty street on the east side, north of Mullins's Hotel, and eastward along the north side of Baltimore to Hanover, and probably beyond. It was the belief of the firemen that the chief peril from the spread of the flames was in these directions and unless checked in some way they would sweep the blocks east to Charles and north to Lexington, or maybe beyond.

On the west side of the fire the fighters had met with some success. Two buildings on the northwest corner of Liberty and Gorman streets, across from Hurst's, were destroyed and the flames put out in them, and while there had been blazes in the Baltimore Bargain House and other stores, the fire was practically out west of Liberty street.

On the south the flames had destroyed Daniel Miller & Sons and R. Hutton & Sons and were taking in warehouses farther south on Hopkins place and Liberty street, but not with as great rapidity as during the first rush.

TWO BANKS BURNED EARLY.

The block bounded by Liberty, Baltimore, Hopkins place and German street, including the National Exchange Bank, was utterly gone. So, too, was the block bounded by Baltimore, Hanover, German and Hopkins place, including the Hopkins Place Savings Bank and about thirty warehouses. The blocks on both sides of Hopkins place down Lombard street seemed gone. East of Hanover street, between Baltimore and German, the block was burning, but there were possibilities of saving it.

At 3 o'clock the apparent centre of the conflagration was at Lombard and Hanover streets. Hopkins place to Lombard street had been swept on both sides and the flames had crossed Lombard. East of Lombard the fire had progressed almost to Hanover burning out several big factories. One thousand men were working on the Lloyd L. Jackson Company building at Liberty and Lombard streets. Chief Horton of the local department saw at once that the Baltimore department would be unable to cope with the conflagration and immediately telegraphed to Washington, Wilmington, Del., and York, Pa., for aid.

A high wind raced up from the bay and the big wholesale buildings melted and crumbled to ruins like grass before a prairie fire. Chief Horton wired to Washington for more engines. All of the Baltimore engines were working, but their efforts seemed utterly useless. Soon after the first alarm was sent out it became evident that there was a fierce fire to fight in the heart of the wholesale district, and the general alarm of four twos was sounded by Chief Horton. Twenty minutes later the few additional engines and trucks held in reserve in different parts were called out and the whole city apparatus was there. Chief Horton telegraphed to the Washington Fire Department for aid and two engines on a special train from that city reached Baltimore, making the run in 45 minutes.

The explosion which ensued in the Hurst Building, and which undoubtedly caused the appalling spread of the flames, was attributed by rumor to various causes. One theory was that there was a gas plant in the building. Another was to the effect that the boilers exploded. A police sergeant who was on the scene said there was no explosion but that the terrible crashes were due to the falling of heavily weighted floors in the Hurst Building. There was no authoritative statement obtainable in the terrible confusion.</